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DEPARTMENT OF STATE TELEGRAM

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 10628 241335Z

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ACTION EA-15

INFO OCT-01 L-04 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-05
NSC-10 SS-20 DODE-00 RSR-01 /064 W

087781

R 241214Z AUG 70
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8376
INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE~~LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 10628~~

SUBJECT: DELINEATION OF THAI-LAO FLUVIAL BOUNDARY

REF: A. VIENTIANE 5706
B. STATE 135079
C. BANGKOK A-129, MARCH 12, 1969

1. EMBASSY CONTINUES TO HOLD TO VIEWS EXPRESSED IN REF C ON DELINEATION OF THAI-LAO FLUVIAL BOUNDARY. WE AGREE WITH DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY VIENTIANE THAT USG SHOULD BE DISINTERESTED SPECTATOR AND TAKE NO ACTION WHICH MIGHT INVOLVE US IN SUCH A SENSITIVE, COMPLEX THAI-LAO BILATERAL QUESTION. WHILE FIG EVIDENTLY IS INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING POSSIBLE BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS WITH RLG, RTG IS NOT LIKELY IN OUR ESTIMATION TO PRESS RLG ON THIS ISSUE AT THIS TIME, GIVEN LAO ATTITUDE AND EXISTENCE OF MORE URGENT PROBLEMS.

2. WE SEE NO REAL ADVANTAGES TO BE GAINED BY PRESSING THAI TO DEFINE CLEARLY THEIR OBJECTIONS TO BORDER DELINEATION AS DRAWN BY USATOPOCOM ON BASIS OF 1926 TREATY. THEREFORE TO MOVE PRESENT MAPPING REVISION PROJECT ALONG, WE FAVOR DEPARTMENT'S SUGGESTION THAT BOUNDARY SYMBOL BE ELIMINATED IN PORTIONS OF RIVER WHERE THERE ARE ISLANDS. WE BELIEVE THAT RTSD WOULD RAISE NO OBJECTIONS TO THIS COURSE OF ACTION WHICH TACITLY REMOVES CAUSE OF ITS RESERVATIONS, AND WOULD NOT REDRAWING BOUNDARY IN AREA OF ISLANDS IN VIEW OF PRESENT RLG ATTITUDE. IF DEPT AGREES, WE PREPARED SEE THIS RAISED WITH RTSD.

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3. WE DO NOT FAVOR ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF PERMITTING RTSD TO DRAW BOUNDARY AND THEN REMOVING ALL DESIGNATIONS IDENTIFYING MAP AS A US PRODUCT, FOR SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION COULD WELL PRECIPITATE OPEN THAI-LAO BOUNDARY DISPUTE FOR WHICH USG LIKELY TO SHARE BLAME DUE TO WIDELY KNOWN USATOPOCOM INVOLVEMENT IN PREPARATION OF THIS MAP SERIES.

4. PERHAPS USATOPOCOM CAN RECOMMEND A MORE SUITABLE CARTOGRAPHIC PLOY TO SOLVE OUR DILEMMA IF DEPARTMENT SUGGESTION ENDORSED PARA 2 ABOVE NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR SOME REASON. EXEMPT UNGER

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ACTION EA-15
INFO OCT-01 PM-05 NSC-10 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 L-04 DODE-00 AID-28 RSR-01 /092 W
----- 073371

R 211046Z AUG 70
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9660
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 5706
SUBJ: DELINEATION OF THAI/LAO BOUNDARY IN
MEKONG RIVER
REF: STATE 135079

1. DURING LAO/THAI TECHNICAL LEVEL TALKS BANGKOK, APRIL 16-23 AND SIMILAR TALKS NOW UNDERWAY VIENTIANE, THAIS RAISED WITH LAO QUESTION OF DEFINING THEIR BORDERS SINCE AGREEMENTS SIGNED WITH FRENCH IN 1904, 1907 AND 1926 APPEAR NO LONGER VALID.
2. LAO, WHO HAVE PREFERRED DISCUSS BREAD-BUTTER QUESTIONS SUCH AS TRADE AND TRANSIT, AUG 20 TOLD THAIS BORDER QUESTION OF EXTREME COMPLEXITY AND JOINT LAT/THAI SUBCOMMITTEE SHOULD PREPARE EXHAUSTIVE AND DETAILED STUDIES.
3. IN VIEW SENSITIVITY BOTH COUNTRIES RE DEFINITION THEIR BORDERS, BELIEVE THAT USG SHOULD, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES, BECOME INVOLVED IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER WITH DEFINING LAO/THAI BORDER. DECON 8/71.
GODLEY

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#074 OBCI ADDED AT 1520
10-6-70

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NSAE-00 L-04 DODE-00 /063 R

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R 192150Z AUG 70
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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SUBJ: DELINEATION OF THE THAI/LAOS BOUNDARY SIN THE MEKONG RIVER

REF: A) STATE CA-855 OF FEBRUARY 10, 1969
B) BANGKOK A-129 OF MARCH 12, 1969

1. ROYAL THAI SURVEY DEPARTMENT (RTSD) AND THE U.S. ARMY TOPOGRAPHIC COMMAND (USATOPOCOM) CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN JOINT LARGE-SCALE MAPPING PROJECT. IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, THAI/LAO MEKONG RIVER BOUNDARY ISSUE RE-RAISED BY RTSD. RTSD POSITION IN THIS MATTER APPARENTLY REMAINS SAME AS DESCRIBED YEAR AGO IN REF. - (I.E., REFUSAL TO ACCEPT 1926 TREATY AND 1931 MAPS AS MOST RECENT VALID BASIS FOR DELINEATION OF THE FLUVIAL BOUNDARY BETWEEN LAOS AND THAILAND.)

2. WE UNDERSTAND FROM USATOPOCOM THAT RTSD RECENTLY SUBMITTED PROBLEM TO MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. IN LIGHT OF PROSPECT THIS MATTER POSSIBLY BEING RAISED TO POLITICAL LEVEL. EMBASSY COMMENTS ARE REQUESTED. DEPARTMENT PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN PROBABLY POLITICAL IMPACT THIS ISSUE.

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A) DOES EMBASSY BANGKOK CONSIDER STANCE RECOMMENDED
IN REF. B. STILL APPROPRIATE?

B) WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ASSESSMENT LIKELY RTG
POLITICAL CLIMATE ON THIS MATTER?

C) DO YOU BELIEVE BASIC QUESTION OF THE LEGAL
BOUNDARY SHOULD BE PRESSED AT THIS JUNCTURE OR THAT IT
MORE PRUDENT (AND PERHAPS ULTIMATELY MORE EFFICIENT--
GIVEN EVER-PRESENT POSSIBILITY CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN
AOS AND ALWAYS SENSITIVE THAI/LAO RELATIONS) TO DEFER
REAL QUESTION?

C) IF FORMER, WHAT OF POSSIBILITY TELLING THAI WE
COULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN REVISING THE MAPS IF THEY CON-
TINUE INSIST ON DISCLAIMER AS BASIS DRAWING BOUNDARIES?

IF WE DEFER QUESTION, WHAT WOULD BE YOUR POLITICAL
REACTION TO IDEA OF SHOWING BOUNDARY SYMBOL WHERE THERE
ARE NO RPT NO ISLANDS AND ELIMINATION OF SYMBOL WHERE
THERE ARE RPT ARE ISLANDS? THIS WOULD ESCHEW ISSUE
FOR NOW AND ALLOW THE PRESENT MAPPING REVISION PROJECT
TO PROCEED. WOULD THE THAI BE PARTICULARLY AMENABLE TO
SUCH A TACTIC?

A THIRD POSSIBILITY EXISTS. THE THAI MIGHT DRAW
BOUNDARIES AS THEY WISH BUT REMOVE ALL DESIGNATIONS
IDENTIFYING THE MAP AS US PRODUCT, THUS AVOIDING GIVING
ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION MAPS REFLECT US OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF
BOUNDARY AS DELINEATED.

3. DEPARTMENT INCLINED AVOID REAL ISSUE FOR PRESENT
AND NOT PRESS THAI ON DEFINING THE QUESTIINABLE AREAS.
BELIEVE PROXIMATE OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE PURSUIT OF BEST
METHOD TO ASSURE CURRENT MAPPING PROJECT PROCEEDS APACE
WHILE RISKS OF THAI-US AND THAI-LAO FRICTION ARE KEPT
TO MINIMUM. REQUEST EMBASSY REPLY ASAP.
ROGERS

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